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 Suburban Orthodox Congregation
 Temple Beth Shalom
 Temple Isaiah
 Zionist Organization of America
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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**House Bill 763 Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention -
 Membership and Sunset**

Judicial Proceedings Committee

March 27, 2024

Support as Amended

Background: House Bill 763 as amended changes the makeup of the Attorney General's Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention so that its representatives are reflective of the goals of the Commission. The amended version removes named organizations, and instead states that 15 individuals who represent or advocate on behalf of individuals who are members of a protected class under the state hate crimes laws will be appointed by the Attorney General.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, all of its agencies, as well as the organized Jewish Community of Greater Baltimore. The BJC has been part of the Hate Crime Commission in all its previous forms since its creation in 2019 as a work group, to task force, to a legislatively created commission in 2023. The named organizations in the 2023 bill were almost all previous members of the work group. While we all had been able to work together in a respectful manner toward the goal of lowering the rate of hate crimes in our state and developing mechanisms to help victims, one organization has been acting in opposition to that goal and has strategically worked toward increasing hate against both the Jewish and LGBTQ+ communities.

CAIR has systematically been working against inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community both nationally and here in Maryland. In Montgomery County the leader of CAIR Maryland stood with members of Moms for Liberty, protesting against LGBTQ+ inclusion in public schools.¹ This organizational stance goes against the principles of the Commission and further silences its LGBTQ+ members.

While CAIR has had a troubled history with antisemitism and anti-Israel rhetoric, until the terrorist attacks on October 7th, the Jewish community in Maryland had been able to work with CAIR Maryland leadership on both legislative initiatives in Maryland and the Commission. However, in the

¹ <https://twitter.com/TimcastNews/status/1694819062331646148>,
<https://twitter.com/FordFischer/status/1666195811904937998>

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aftermath of the largest number of Jews murdered since the Holocaust, CAIR national and CAIR Maryland have been relentless and unapologetic in their antisemitism and flat-out dangerous lies about the war in Israel and Gaza. On the national level, CAIR's leader said he "was happy to see" the terrorist attacks which brutally murdered 1,200 innocent Israeli civilians.² He also used dangerous age-old antisemitic tropes to state that Jews control politicians.³ As a result, the White House and Biden administration removed CAIR from its newly created national strategy on combating antisemitism. If the White House is removing CAIR from its partners against hate, Maryland should as well.

In Maryland, the day after the horrific attacks, and days before Israel launched a counterattack, CAIR Maryland's leader was in front of the White House cheering on the atrocities, and a photo was proudly posted on CAIR National's X page.⁴ Since then the leader of CAIR Maryland, who sits on the Commission, has posted hundreds of times on their verified Facebook page with tens of thousands of followers, promoting unabashedly antisemitic rhetoric and dangerously false information about the actions of Israel. They have stated that babies were not actually killed on October 7th, that Israel is harvesting organs from Palestinians, and that Jews control politicians. These are all antisemitic ideologies -- Holocaust denial (denial of Jewish deaths), blood libel, and Jewish control of government.⁵

HB763 as amended removes all organizations, including CAIR and entrusts the Attorney General to ensure that Commissioners are working to end hate in Maryland, not perpetuate it.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of HB763 as amended.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/08/us/politics/white-house-cair-nihad-awad.html>

³ <https://jewishinsider.com/2023/12/nihad-awad-council-american-islamic-relations-israel-gaza-terror-attacks/>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/CAIRNational/status/1711158966992941475>

⁵ See attached screenshots.

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 **Zainab Chaudry** 
 15h · 

Gaza media office: vital organs stolen from 80 bodies of Palestinians returned to Karam Abu Salem border crossing

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 "After examining the bodies, it is clear that the features of those killed had changed greatly, in a clear indication that the Israeli occupation had stolen vital organs from them," the statement went on to say.

The media office said this is not the first time that Israel has "mutilated" Palestinian bodies, and has called for an independent international investigation committee into the kidnapping of Palestinian bodies and theft of their vital organs.

'Israel has previously exhumed graves in Jabalia and stole some of the bodies, in addition to the fact that it still has dozens of bodies from the Gaza Strip in its possession,' the office said."


 **Zainab Chaudry** 
 41m · 

it's no surprise that organizations like the ADL who prioritize the interests of the most right wing, fascist administration in the history of Israel, want to smear and silence voices raising awareness about Israel's war crimes and the genocide in Gaza by falsely labeling them as anti-Semitic

but it also shouldn't surprise anyone that lawmakers bought and paid for by Israel's lobbying arm in the United States at every level of the government are also trying to distort, twist and silence us

one could ask where is their humanity, but we already know the answer. you can try to silence one voice, ten voices, but you can't silence millions.

criticism of apartheid, genocide, illegal occupation, settler colonial violence, crimes against humanity isn't antisemitic. it's pro-humanity.

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